GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:49
ANSWERED ON:19.11.2001
DECLINE IN SOIL NUTRIENTS
RAMESHWAR DUDI

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether agricultural production is adversely effected due to decline in the soil nutrients;

(b) whether the fertility of soil is declining constantly due to inadequate and imbalanced use of fertilizers in the country since the Indian farmers are using fertilizers as per their own discretion and budget;

(c) if so, whether it is likely to be difficult even to provide food to the increased population; and

(d) the details of the measures taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUM DEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a)to(d): Agriculture production depends on a number of factors like seeds, fertilizers, plant protection measures, irrigation/rainfall and crop management practices etc. Fertilizers do make a significant contribution in increasing the agriculture production which has been gradually increasing with corresponding increase in consumption of fertilizers. During 1998-99 food grain production of 203.61 million tonnes was attained with average nutrient consumption of 88.05 kg per hectare. During 1999-2000 the food grain production was 208.87 million tonnes and the nutrient consumption 94.70 kg. per hectare. During 2000-2001 both the food grain production and fertilizer consumption declined due to drought like situation in many States. However, there are instances of decline in soil health and productivity due to inadequate and imbalanced use of fertilizers in certain parts of the country. The Government has taken some of the following steps to encourage the balanced use of fertilizers.

(i) The soil testing programme is periodically strengthened to make the fertilizer use recommendations according to the nutrient status of the soils.

(ii) Financial support is given to decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilizers so as to increase their consumption and thereby bring balance in N P K consumption.

(iii) Use of integrated nutrients through chemical fertilizers and organic sources like biofertilisers, compost/vermicompost is being encouraged so as to maintain soil fertility and make cheaper source of plant nutrients available to the crops.

Government efforts have helped in improving nutrient consumption ratio which was 9.5:3.2:1 during 1992-93 and has narrowed down to 6.9:2.7:1 during 1999-2000. No problem is anticipated about providing food for increased population.